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Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.8

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

I. Request contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 28 and 29 of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.8, the General Assembly would:

(a) Note that pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 54/68, the Office for Outer Space Affairs had submitted to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for its review at its forty-third session a plan of action to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III; and

(b) Request the Secretary-General to implement the measures and activities contained in the plan of action, based on the recommendations of UNISPACE III.

2. Prior to adoption of the report on its forty-third session,[1] the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was informed, in an oral statement by the Secretariat, of the estimated costs relating to the implementation of its decision to endorse the plan of action and to recommend its implementation.

II. Relationship of the request to the programme of work

3. The activities contained in the plan of action fall under Programme 3, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, as revised.

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and under Section 6, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

III. Activities by which the request would be implemented

4. Certain activities recommended by UNISPACE III fall within the work programme of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and were included in the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, under regular budget funding, supplemented by extrabudgetary resources. Activities contained in the plan of action endorsed by the Committee for which provision was not made in the programme budget for the biennium include:

(a) Strengthening the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees in promoting international cooperation in the use of outer space;

(b) Initiating a capacity-building programme in areas relating to space law;

(c) Strengthening the activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications;

(d) Promoting the use of space technologies within the United Nations system;

(e) Establishing and strengthening the partnership with industry;

(f) Strengthening the partnership with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

(g) Initiating a public outreach programme and a programme for young people;

(h) Strengthening publication and information services.

5. To these ends, outputs to be included in the programme budget for 2000-2001 for regular budget funding would include: a report to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the results of a biannual global survey of existing mechanisms for international cooperation in space activities; creation and maintenance of a web site on the global survey; an analytical study to identify areas of space-related activities where new and innovative mechanisms for cooperation are required; development of a database on national space laws and policies; development of training modules for integrating space technology into disaster-specific management; implementation of Technology Outreach Programmes; a report containing results and analysis of a survey of the status of the use of space science and technology and its applications within the United Nations system.

IV. Additional resource requirements

6. The additional requirements are estimated at $426,300, for the establishment of two P-3 level and one P-2 level posts ($118,100), consultants ($9,000), travel ($46,000), general operating expenses ($1,700), equipment ($36,000), external printing ($5,500) and an increase for fellowships ($210,000) with respect to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications.

7. Two P-3 level posts are required to undertake activities relating to increasing the technical capacity of Member States, particularly that of developing countries, in space law; strengthening the capacity of the Office to provide technical advisory services to other organizations of the United Nations system in their use of space technology to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their activities in economic and social development (e.g., integration of satellite communications in disaster response and in provision of education programmes and public health services, use of Earth observation data in developing strategies for disaster reduction, management of natural resources, and environment monitoring and assessment); and assisting in the development of training modules for integrating space technology in disaster management and for using global positioning and navigation satellites; assisting in the establishment of an information network on activities in basic space science and the expansion of the small telescope network, particularly in developing countries, and initiating an interactive multimedia education service in space science and technology.

8. One P-2 level post would assist in initiating public outreach programmes by organizing a programme of visits by astronauts, events during World Space Week, and an annual public forum; developing strategies to integrate selected advanced information technologies into the work of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities; developing a web site on the global survey of existing mechanisms for international cooperation in space activities; developing programme content of the multimedia education service in space science and technology.

9. The sum of $9,000 would be required for consultants to be engaged in the development of the first of a series of modules for integrating space technology into disaster-specific management and for the biannual global survey of existing mechanisms for international cooperation in space activities. It is estimated that $46,000 would be required for the travel of staff for the conduct of needs assessment for integrating space technology into economic and social planning through satellite communication; development of projects related to the use of space technology in disaster management; expansion of a small telescope network in developing countries; participation in meetings of space-related industry; organization in different regions of a round table of legislators who are advocates of space activities and a workshop on space law; provision of substantive support for the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations by non-governmental entities; participation in the organization of events to be held during World Space Week in different regions.

10. The sum of $36,000 would provide for data-processing equipment, including software for the development of databases on national space policies and laws and CD-ROMs containing multimedia educational materials on space science and technology. General operating expenses in the amount of $1,700 would be required for the maintenance of three additional computers for the three new staff members. The sum of $5,500 for contractual services would provide for the external printing of booklets on project proposals from developing countries for distribution to space-related industry and donors.

11. As part of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, the sum of $210,000 is required under grants and contributions to finance fellowships. This amount would provide, within the framework of the Technology Outreach Programme, support for the participation of individuals from developing countries in

a workshop on the legal aspects of space; fellowships to the centres on space science and technology education and the Network on Space Science and Technology Education and Research Institutions for Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe; and assistance for the integration of space technology into disaster management.

V. Potential for absorption

12. No provision was included in the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 for the above-mentioned additional requirements.

VI. Contingency fund

13. Under the procedure established by the General Assembly in resolution 41/213 and, in effect, starting with the biennium 1990-1991, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under the same procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed resources available from the contingency fund, those activities can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low priority areas or modifications in projected activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred until a later biennium. A consolidated statement of all programme budget implications and revised estimates will be submitted to the Assembly towards the end of its current session.

VII. Summary

14. Should the General Assembly approve paragraphs 28 and 29 of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.8, it is estimated that an additional appropriation of $426,300 would be required under Section 6, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the programme budget for 2000-2001. In addition, an amount of $22,600 would be required under Section 32, Staff assessment, to be offset by the same amount under Income Section 1, Income from staff assessment.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/55/20).